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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/607,905	06/27/2003	Salvatore Pavone	TI-35748	7543
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TEXAS INSTRUMENTS INCORPORATED P O BOX 655474, M/S 3999 DALLAS, TX 75265			EXAMINER BLAN, NICOLE R	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1792	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			11/29/2007	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/607,905	PAVONE, SALVATORE	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Nicole Blan	1792	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 September 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 and 16-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 and 16-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The amendments to the specification and claims on September 7, 2007 have been acknowledged.
2. The objections to the specification and claims as well as the U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejections are withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
 2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
 3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
 4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.
5. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seamons et al (U.S. 6,060,397) in view of Law et al (U.S. 4,960,488).

Seamons teaches an in-situ cleaning of residues for a CVD chamber comprising introducing a fluorocarbon gas under the certain cleaning conditions inside the chamber and detecting endpoint of cleaning. As a fluorocarbon gas, C₃F₈ is specifically recited (col.4, lines 30-34; col. 10, lines 26-36, 48-62). Seamons also indicates that the cleaning method

may be performed using a multi-step cleaning process wherein electrode spacing is adjusted to selectively clean inner and outer surfaces of the interior wall of the chamber and other surfaces. While indicating a multi-step cleaning process, Seamons remains silent about maintaining the pressure during the cleaning in the way specified in the instant claims 1 and 16.

Law teaches an effective multi-step CVD chamber self cleaning process, which includes adjusting the electrode spacing in order to selectively clean electrodes and nearby chamber components under high pressure (localized cleaning) and clean the more distant areas of the chamber at lower pressure, wherein cleaning electrodes and nearby chamber components under the high pressure is repeated a number of times (reads on “a first cleaning step” and “a second cleaning step” as instantly claimed) before the lower pressure cleaning (reads on “a third cleaning step”, as instantly claimed) is performed (col. 2, lines 17-21; paragraph, bridging col. 11 and 12; col.15, lines 3-5).

Therefore, since Seamons is concerned with multi-step cleaning of CVD chamber and Law provides the sequence of processing steps to effectively clean the CVD chamber, one skilled in the art motivated by Law would have found obvious to utilize the sequential processing steps of Law in order to effectively clean residues from interior surfaces of CVD chamber in the multi-step cleaning process of Seamons with the reasonable expectation of success.

With regard to the preamble of claim 1, reciting “a deposition chamber having multiple substrate stations”, it is noted that a preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps are able to stand alone, consult *In re Hirao*, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976).

With regard to claim 16, while teaching the steps of placing (transferring) a wafer (substrate) into CVD chamber, depositing material layers on the wafer (paragraph, bridging col. 3 and 4) and cleaning the CVD chamber in multiple steps, Seamons remains silent about transferring a plurality of substrates into a deposition chamber having multiple substrate stations. However, since treatment of multiple substrates in the CVD processing chamber having multiple substrate treatment stations is known in the art, one skilled in the art would have found obvious to utilize a deposition chamber with multiple substrate treatment stations in lieu of the CVD chamber of Seamons, if processing a number of similar substrates under similar processing conditions are required, and perform cleaning of such chamber as per teaching of Seamons/Law in order to enhance production output and provide cost efficient processing.

With regard to claim 4, since the first and second cleaning steps of Seamons/Law are used for localized cleaning, and cleaning time depends on frequency of cleaning steps and particular deposits to be removed, thus representing result effective parameter, it is within the skills of the ordinary skilled in the art to establish a proper time for such cleaning to obtain the optimum performance of CVD processing equipment. With regard to the limitation reciting that a duration of the third cleaning step is a function of the duration of the first cleaning step, one skilled in the art would have found obvious to establish such function since the third cleaning step is used as the final cleaning step, the effectiveness of which obviously depends on the cleanness of the localized areas of CVD chamber, performed by the first cleaning step.

With regard to claim 5, since Law teaches cleaning of extended chamber area under higher pressure, one skilled in the art would have found obvious to raise the pressure in the

second cleaning step to extend the cleaning area upon first cleaning step in order to reduce total chamber cleaning time, thus enhancing output of the CVD processing equipment.

With regard to claim 17, Seamons suggests to connect a selected particle count threshold limit with selected deposition rate (paragraph bridging col.5 and 6).

With regard to claim 18, Seamons teaches a wipe clean out of the CVD chamber. As to the limitations of claims 19 and 20, it is within the skills of the ordinary skilled in the art to determine the thickness of the deposits and the number of deposition hours upon which the cleaning must be effectuated.

Claims 3, 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seamons et al (U.S. 6,060,397) in view of Law et al (U.S. 4,960,488) and in further view of Richardson et al (U.S. 7,028,696).

With regard to claim 3, Seamons teaches CVD chamber cleaning wherein endpoint is determined by monitoring optical emissions from fluorine (col. 5, lines 33-39; col. 6, lines 35-67; col. 7, lines 1-5). Seamons remains silent about monitoring optical emission from carbon monoxide. However, monitoring optical emission from carbon monoxide is utilized in the art wherein oxygen is also used for chamber cleaning. Thus, Richardson teaches monitoring optical emission to detect endpoint of chamber cleaning. In addition to monitoring optical emission from fluorine, Richardson specifically indicates monitoring optical emission from carbon monoxide upon using oxygen for chamber cleaning, which leads to the formation of carbon monoxide (col. 11, lines 19-49).

Therefore, since Seamons/Law teach the use of gaseous cleaning mixture containing oxygen and Richardson teaches the chamber cleaning process utilizing oxygen and monitoring

optical emission from carbon monoxide for determining the endpoint of chamber cleaning, one skilled in the art motivated by Richardson would have found obvious to monitor optical emission from carbon monoxide in addition to fluorine in order to precisely determine the endpoint in CVD chamber cleaning process of Seamons/Law.

The teaching of Seamons/Law remains silent about controller, as specified in claim 8. However, computerized process controllers are conventionally utilized in the art. Thus, Richardson teaches two step chamber cleaning operation controlled by computer to automatically start the wafer-less plasma cleans at set wafer processing intervals. The process parameters are input as a recipe and the process parameters are controlled by a system, such as a programmable logic controller that interfaces with the reaction chamber. Therefore, one skilled in the art motivated by Richardson would have found obvious to utilize a controller to automate and enhance efficiency of the multi-step chamber cleaning processing of Seamons/Law.

6. Claim 6 is are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seamons et al (U.S. 6,060,397) in view of Law et al (U.S. 4,960,488) and in further view of Cheung et al (5,158,644).

Seamons/Law do not specifically indicate flow rates of fluorocarbon as instantly claimed. However, since the flow rates of cleaning gases are result effective, discovery of optimum value of result effective variable in known process is ordinarily within the skill in the art and would have been obvious. Besides, such rates are conventionally used in the art while cleaning CVD chamber with fluorocarbons. Thus, Cheung teaches two-steps cleaning of CVD chamber, wherein the same fluorocarbon is used in both steps and wherein the flow rates of fluorocarbon correspond to the instantly claimed values (col.6, lines 36-45). Therefore, one

skilled in the art would have found obvious to utilize the fluorocarbon flow rates of Cheung while cleaning the CVD chamber in the process of Seamons/Law with the reasonable expectation of success.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed September 7, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

8. In response to the Applicant's argument regarding the deposition chamber having multiple substrate stations: the preamble and the body of the claim are not bound together for examination purposes. As the previous Examiner stated in the office action from March 7, 2007, the preamble recites "a deposition chamber having multiple substrate stations" which is not accorded any patentable weight where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps are able to stand alone. *In re Hirao*, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976).

9. In response to Applicant's arguments, 37 CFR § 1.111(b) states, "A general allegation that the claims define a patentable invention without specifically pointing out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the reference does not comply with the requirements of this section." Applicant has failed to specifically point out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the references. For this reason, the Examiner disagrees with the Applicant in respect to stating "it would not necessarily be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply a clean process for a single wafer tool to a multiple wafer tool." The Examiner believes it would be obvious based on the prior art to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that cleaning the deposition chamber locally as well as

extending it to further reaching areas in the chamber and that the benefits of cleaning locally and extended cleaning would be obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill regardless if it is for a single wafer deposition chamber or a multiple deposition chamber.

10. In response to the Applicant's argument regarding the endpoint: the details of what qualifies an endpoint is not specified. Therefore, the repeating of the first cleaning process of Law does in fact constitute a second cleaning process because there was a factor that determined an end to the first process which in turn resulted in the repeating the cleaning a second time. Thus, the disclosed "second cleaning" of Law does in fact read on the third step of the cleaning process in the instant application.

Conclusion

11. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

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12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nicole Blan whose telephone number is 571-270-1838. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 8-5 and alternating Fridays 8-4.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Cleveland can be reached on 571-272-1418. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

NRB 

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PRIMARY EXAMINER

